

***TOWN OF NEWFIELDS BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2007***

The meeting was called to order at 6:36pm. Selectmen present were: Michael Woodworth, Wes Moore, and James McIlroy. Others present were: Chief Reed.

James informed the other Selectmen that he spoke with Reuben Hull (the Town Planner) about his contract which expired two months ago. The Selectmen will meet with Reuben in June to review his performance, see what projects he is working on, and to set priorities.

Chief Reed reviewed the information about Hazardous Mitigation Grants and is looking for suggestions from the Board of Selectmen on possible projects. Certain areas on Route 87, Route 85, and Bald Hill Road are subject to flooding and should be considered. The Chief will speak with the Road Agent for his suggestions on possible projects and will write the Grant Application for the Town.

The Town of Newfields received two awards from the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire. The first award is "In recognition of its partnership with the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire to conserve the 69 acre COLE FARM located on Bald Hill Road in Newfields, New Hampshire". The second award is The Jack Heath Conservation Award "Presented by the Southeast Land Trust of New Hampshire's Board of Directors to honor and recognize vision, leadership, and enduring support of conservation in Rockingham County." This is the first time The Jack Heath Conservation Award has been awarded to a town, all of the previous awards have been presented to individuals. Selectmen James McIlroy and Conservation Commission Member Alison Watts attended the award ceremony.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm in order to open the Public Hearing on the Proposed Bicycle Lane.

The Public Hearing on the Proposed Bicycle Lane was called to order at 7:00pm. Approximately thirty people attended the hearing. The Selectmen stated that they are not opposed to a bicycle lane, and in fact support bicycle lanes in general. However, they cannot legally enter into a multi-year contract with the State, expend funds (even though most of the funds will be reimbursed), or take land by eminent domain, (if necessary) without a Town vote. This was confirmed by Town Counsel Fran Lane.

Once the contract is signed, the Town is obligated to construct a bicycle lane. Newfields could not be dropped from the design plan as previously suggested.

The fact that the Town cannot “opt out” of the contract at will was confirmed by Reuben Hull and by Scott Bogle of the Rockingham Planning Commission. The only reason the Town could opt out would be for a design rejection or cost issues and the State of New Hampshire would have to agree.

The Rockingham Planning Commission is willing to help and support Newfields in the project. Cliff Sennott of the Rockingham Planning Commission hopes the project will go forward and believes the bridge can be improved to make it safer for bicycles. Scott Bogle feels that the State has sufficient right of way already and that eminent domain would not come into play.

Even though the State of New Hampshire is paying 20% of the project and the Federal Government is paying 80% of the project, the Town of Newfields will still have un-reimbursed expenses.

Although the completion of this bicycle lane would form a loop around Great Bay, Stratham has not been contacted for their portion of the loop. The Madbury portion was constructed by the State, not a municipality.

Eric Nichols and Elliot Alexander added that bicycle lanes are included in the Master Plan for Newfields. Elliot feels the Town should take advantage of someone else paying for a bicycle lane. He feels bicycle traffic is increasing in the Northeast.

Eric gave a short presentation on how he feels the bicycle lane could be constructed to alleviate concerns with it going over the bridge.

Mary August asked if a Special Town Meeting could be held so that the Town could vote yes or no on this project. The Selectmen advised this could be done but there would be expenses involved in holding a Special Town Meeting. Fran Lane stated that it would take two to three months to set up a Special Town Meeting.

Barbara Hayden expressed her appreciation to the Board of Selectmen for their work and caution with regard to this project.

Wes made a motion to appoint a Transportation Advisory Committee if five members volunteer to be on the Committee tonight. The first priority of the Committee would be the Route 108 Bicycle Lane Project. The five members that accepted placement on the Committee were: Tracy Bentley, Elliot Alexander, Eric Nichols, and Michael Price. The Advisory Committee will research the issue and report back to the Selectmen.

Tracy Bentley asked if the Committee could also look into Coast Transportation servicing Newfields again. This is acceptable to the Board of Selectmen, but the Committee’s priority is the proposed bicycle lane. Tracy also asked that the

Selectmen contact other towns that have bicycle lanes to find out how they handled the legal and liability issues. James stated that this activity would be appropriate for the Advisory Committee to pursue.

Michael seconded the motion and the motion passed with all in favor.

Jeff Buxton stated that not all of the bicycle lane would meet federal guidelines and asked who is legally responsible. The Town would have legal liability for the bicycle lane and would have to maintain it after construction is completed. Jeff also stated that Route 108 is the only commercially zoned area in Town and hopes the bicycle lane will not impede development. He is in full support of the bicycle lane, but the bridge is a real concern to him. He stated that 90% of the vehicle accidents in Town are on Route 108.

The Selectmen reminded the people attending the Public Hearing that the Town is also looking for volunteers for the following positions:

Planning Board Member  
Budget Advisory Committee Member  
Celebration Committee Members  
Newfields Fire Department Volunteers  
Clean Up Day Volunteers – two days per year

The meeting was adjourned at 8:25pm.

The Selectmen's Meeting reconvened at 8:30pm. Wes advised the other Board Members that Tom Closson has completed the Personnel Policy changes.

The letter from the New Hampshire Department of Labor was reviewed. In order to comply with the Departments' regulations, "Safety Summary" was added to the Open Items List.

The Garden Club has planted lilacs at the Town Hall and has decided not to plant lilacs at the Battles Monument at this time. The Selectmen appreciate and applaud the fine work of the Garden Club.

The Town currently has a credit with Hartmann Oil, the supplier of oil to the Town Hall. Next year's supply will be put out to bid and if Hartmann Oil is does not have the winning bid, we will ask them to refund the Town's overpayment.

Correspondence from the Lane Law Offices was reviewed.

The Legal Notice from the Newfield Planning Board was reviewed.

James made a motion to accept the Minutes of the June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 meeting. Michael seconded the motion and the motion passed with both in favor. Wes abstained from the voting as he did not attend that meeting.

The Selectmen are looking for the estimate obtained by Reuben Hull for the handrail to be installed on the handicap ramp. Nancy will remind Reuben to forward the estimate.

Wes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45pm. James seconded the motion and the motion passed with all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Spencer